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News Release

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USFS Sierra National Forest Begins Scoping on Revised Forest Plan

CLOVIS, CALIF., AUGUST 29, 2014—FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. The Sierra National Forest today announced a 30-day public scoping period to start the National Environmental Policy Act process for revising forest plans on the Sierra, Sequoia and Inyo National Forests. The scoping period will begin on August 29, 2014, when the Notice of Intent (NOI) is published in the Federal Register.

The Sierra, Sequoia and Inyo are three of eight national forests selected as “early adopters,” meaning they will be the first forests to revise their land management plans under the 2012 Forest Service Planning Rule. The planning rule provides the framework for Forest Service land management plans on national forests across the nation. These three forest plan revisions will be completed through the development of one environmental impact statement (EIS). The final EIS will result in three separate Records of Decision and three separate forest plans. Forest Supervisors are the responsible officials for making decisions on their specific forest plans.

A “scoping period” gives the public a chance to tell the Forest Service what issues and concerns they think should be addressed in the EIS before alternatives are developed and analyzed in the EIS. Public involvement is a critical piece of this analysis and comments received will be considered in the range of preliminary alternatives, which will be made available for public review and comment when drafted.

The Forest Service expects to release a draft of the EIS and alternatives for public review by spring 2015. Development of the EIS includes a robust public involvement process, which begins with the scoping period announced today.

The Sierra National Forest's public meeting to answer questions and accept written public comment will be held on Monday, September 15, from 6:00-8:00pm - at the Holiday Inn Fresno Airport, 5090 East Clinton Way, Fresno, CA 93727

- In addition to the primary meeting time noted above, there will be an additional one hour session from 5:00pm to 6:00pm, tailored specifically to provide information to those who provided comments to date; those who would like to know more about the comment process and an opportunity to speak one on one with forest staff on their particular area of interest.

The Forest Service values public participation. Communications from the public regarding this project, including commenter's names and contact information, will become part of the public record. Comments, including anonymous comments, will be accepted at any time. However, comments posted after the close of a designated comment period may not be given full consideration. Anonymous comments and comments submitted after the close of the final designated comment period will not provide the commenter standing for administrative review.

Scoping comments must be received by September 29, 2014 and may be submitted:

- Online: <http://tinyurl.com/r5earlyadopters> (click on the **"Comment on Project"** hyperlink under the "Get Connected" topic at the right side of the webpage),
- Electronic mail: R5planrevision@fs.fed.us , or
- U.S. mail: Land Management Plan Revision, U.S. Forest Service, 1839 South Newcomb Street, Porterville, CA 93257.

Please remember to specify which forest or forests your comments apply to. For forest-specific information, please contact that forest directly:

- Sierra NF: Dirk Charley at 559-297-0706 x4805 or dcharley@fs.fed.us or Judi Tapia at 559-297-0706, x4938 or jetapia@fs.fed.us
- Inyo NF: Deb Schweizer at 760-873-2427 or debraaschweizer@fs.fed.us
- Sequoia NF: Alicia Embrey at 559-784-1500 or aliciamembrey@fs.fed.us

The NOI, detailed proposed action and maps are available for review at <http://tinyurl.com/r5earlyadopters>. For previous information regarding forest plan revision documents and the planning process prior to the release of the NOI and scoping period, please visit the Pacific Southwest Region's planning website at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r5/landmanagement/planning/?cid=STELPRD3802842>.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if special assistance to participate in this meeting is needed, please contact the appropriate National Forest. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Forest Service to make reasonable arrangements.

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